



The Parks, Plazas, and Placemaking chapter offers strategies for creating new publicly accessible open spaces within the existing and planned context of the Santana Row/Valley Fair Urban Village. It is vital that new residential and commercial communities incorporate well-designed and accessible public spaces. The SRVF Urban Village is currently underserved by these facilities; planning for these spaces will enhance the area’s sense of place, reinforce walkability and bikeability, and enhance the character and identity of this community. In addition, the incorporation of public art into the public realm will play a vital role in increasing the unique and positive identity of this community.

This Plan is intended to meet the open space needs of existing residents, new residents and visitors to the area. This Plan envisions the creation of a system of various types and sizes of open spaces, which may include: traditional community parks, multi-purpose plazas, pocket parks, and active or passive paseos. Together with high-quality, native landscaping and public art, each of these types of spaces can provide much needed opportunities for recreation and social interaction, and contribute to the positive identity and visual character of the SRVF Urban Village.

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Traditionally, parks in San José have been developed as large spaces of at least one acre that provide recreational opportunities such as ball fields, playgrounds and trails. The SRVF Village includes Frank M. Santana Park, a traditional community park, on the corner of Tisch Way and South Monroe Street, as well as a few other privately owned and publicly accessible pocket parks and plazas throughout the Village.

Today, as San José seeks to transform many of its suburban auto-oriented areas into more walkable urban villages there is a need to add open spaces, even small urban spaces. As such, this Plan envisions the development of a Green Web throughout the SRVF Village that also connects to the adjacent Stevens Creek and Winchester Urban Villages. The Green Web will consist of a network of various types and sizes of public and publicly accessible, but privately maintained, open spaces. As new development occurs, space on each site will be dedicated to open space. The open space can have a variety of forms, including an Emergency Vehicle Access (EVA) that doubles as an active paseo, a large multi-purpose plaza, a small corner plaza, a passive paseo that separates a new development from existing single-family houses, or a recreation path in the public right-of-way. These spaces will be located so as to easily and logically connect together to create a web of connected open spaces throughout the Village.

## 4.1 Parks and Plazas

Open spaces within this Plan are envisioned on both publicly owned (City) sites and privately owned publicly accessible spaces. Whether publicly or privately owned, open spaces must collectively create an interconnected system that meet the needs of the Urban Village. Below is a description of each type of open space envisioned for this urban environment, followed by goals, policies and guidelines.

### *Traditional Parks*

Traditional parks tend to be larger parks (over 1 acre in area) that are owned and maintained by the City. In order for a parcel to be officially designated as parkland, the City must first own the property. The City finances park development through the City's Parkland Dedication Ordinance (PDO). The PDO requires that new residential or mixed-use residential commercial development dedicate land for public parks, pay a fee in lieu of parkland dedication, construct new park facilities, or provide a combination of these. The total funding obligation is based on the number of residential units built.

### *Multi-Purpose Plaza (Plaza)*

Plazas represent a creative way to provide publicly accessible open space in urban areas. Plazas are spaces that are open to the public, and may be owned, developed and maintained either privately or publicly. This Plan requires the dedication of land or construction of a privately owned and publicly accessible plaza by a residential developer to receive parkland credit as part of their obligation under the City's Park Dedication and Park Impact Ordinances (PDO/PIO).

Plazas should be visually engaging gathering spaces for community members to socialize and to hold neighborhood events. Features such as art installations, fountains, unique landscaping draw the eye to these lively, urban focal points. These spaces should also be used for commercial activity including outdoor seating for restaurants and cafes, or active spaces for food carts and small farmers' markets.



*Neighborhood parks often have active facilities with a community center or clubhouse.*



*Multi-purpose plazas may be entirely or partially hardscape and surrounded by active uses, creating opportunities for food trucks or farmers' markets.*



### ***Pocket Parks***

Pocket parks contain landscaped area and neighborhood-serving amenities. Pocket parks are typically built on single lots or irregularly shaped pieces of land and owned and maintained by private developments. Pocket parks may be constructed by residential developers on private property. Provided that the park remains publicly accessible, they may be eligible for “private recreation” credit as part of their obligation under the City’s Park Land Dedication and Park Impact Ordinances. Pocket parks should include areas to socialize, sit and relax.

### ***Potential Location of a Park or Plaza***

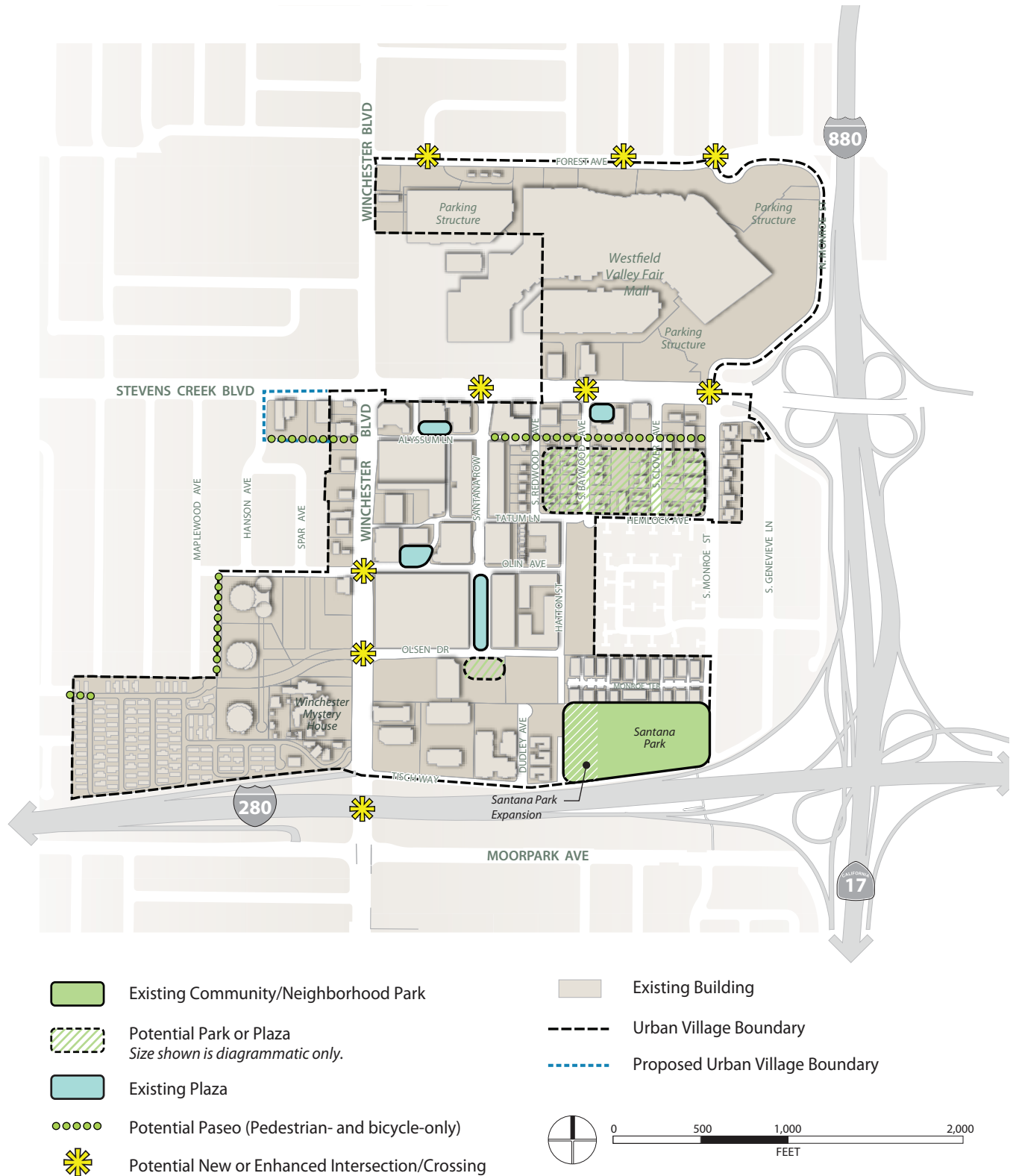
The City does not envision another traditional park in this Urban Village in addition to Frank M. Santana Park because most of this Village is built out and the size of parcels make it difficult for parcels assembly. The potential location of a park and plaza is envisioned in the hatched area on Figure 4-1 between South Monroe Street to the east, Redwood Street to the west, Hemlock Avenue to the south and the paseo identified on the map to the north.



*Pocket parks or parklets may create additional green space, non-traditional open space for social interaction, and utilize small, irregularly shaped land.*



FIGURE 4-1: PARKS AND OPEN SPACE FRAMEWORK



## 4.1-1 PARKS AND PLAZAS

**GOAL P-1** Create public parks and plazas that are attractive, vibrant, and provide places for community activities and interaction that will contribute to the livability of the SRVF Urban Village.

### Policies

- Policy 4-1:** Provide a system of parks that serves the needs of both the existing and future residents of the Village as well as surrounding community.
- Policy 4-2:** Neighborhood parks should be designed and configured in a manner that provides secure and usable open space and maximizes accessibility to the surrounding community.
- Policy 4-3:** Support development of parks that benefit people of all ages.
- Policy 4-4:** Promote the use of native vegetation in new parks.
- Policy 4-5:** New development should be designed to address and be integrated with adjacent open spaces.
- Policy 4-6:** Parks and plazas shall be appropriately programmed and properly maintained.
- Policy 4-7:** Support the redevelopment of excess land (reclaimed space, e.g. large landscaped buffers, setback areas, extra right-of-way, etc.) into useable active or passive pocket parks through a joint use agreement with the property owner and the City of San Jose or other appropriate mechanism.
- Policy 4-8:** Support and encourage the redevelopment of surface parking lots into public parks by consolidating the surface parking into parking garages.

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### Action Items

- » Explore opportunities for the City to acquire property specifically for park development, especially properties designated in the Plan's Land Use Diagram as Open Space, Parkland.

## 4.1-2 PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE AND PRIVATELY MAINTAINED URBAN PLAZAS

**GOAL P-2** Ensure the creation of publicly accessible, but privately owned and maintained urban plazas.

### Policies

- Policy 4-9:** As new development occurs, space on each site should be dedicated to some form of open space. These spaces should be located so as to easily and logically connect with other open spaces in the surrounding area to create a connected Green Web of open space throughout the Urban Village.
- Policy 4-10:** Integrate publicly accessible, but privately owned and maintained urban plazas into new development that are attractive, vibrant and that provide for community activities and space for casual interactions.
- Policy 4-11:** Encourage new plazas to be business-supportive, allowing for flexible expansion of businesses into private park space on a permanent, seasonal, or temporary, basis.

### Action Items

- » Explore policy or ordinance changes that would facilitate the development and maintenance of privately-owned plazas within the SRVF Urban Village.
- » Explore modifying Parkland Dedication Ordinance (PDO) requirements to allow commercial activities like farmer's markets and café seating within privately owned but publicly accessible spaces.



*Privately owned, publicly accessible spaces create opportunities for local businesses to host events and engage with the community.*



# GUIDELINES

## Parks and Plazas

### *Location and Scale*

- Parks and Plazas should have at least one but ideally two sides open to the street.
- Locate and orient plazas to maximize sunlight access throughout the day and provide uses that take advantage of the sunny location (e.g. cafés and patios). Encourage south-facing parks, as they maximize the space's exposure to direct sunlight.
- Plazas should be of a minimum size of 1,100 square feet to include tree plantings and seating areas.
- Pocket parks should be a minimum of 850 square feet. A pocket park can be of an intimate scale, providing a tranquil setting.
- Avoid fragmentation of open spaces where possible. Larger areas provide more flexibility to accommodate a range of social functions as well as more usable space and easier irrigation.
- Parks and Plazas should be connected to bike and pedestrian facilities and be a part of an interconnected pathway or parkway system where feasible.
- Parks and plazas should reflect the design and placemaking elements of the surrounding area

through the use of architectural styles, signage, colors, textures, materials and other elements

### *Uses & Programming*

- Plazas should include casual use, passing through, secondary pedestrian routes, building entrances and small gathering spaces.
- Provide a variety of seating opportunities such as traditional benches as well as mobile chairs, which give the users the ability to rotate the chairs for sunlight or shade.
- At the time of design and construction, plazas should be designed to accommodate pop-up retail. Provide bollards, power outlets, clips on the ground and plug and play for music performance.
- Parks and plazas should consider water feature, canopies, trees, planting, public art installation, children's play facilities, concession stands or washrooms where appropriate.
- Publicly accessible open space shall be accessible to the public from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days per week at a minimum.
- Encourage edible gardens to improve access to fresh food.
- Consider a dog park as a part of pocket parks where appropriate.



Parks and plazas may create a sense of community engagement, discovery, and connection in the Santana Row/Valley Fair Urban Village.

# GUIDELINES

## *Edges and Access*

- Parks and plazas should be primarily defined by adjacent buildings, which will contribute to the unity and environmental quality of the space.
- At least one edge should be open to the public sidewalk. The remaining edges should be comprised of building façades, potentially with mid-block pedestrian connections.
- Plazas should generally be located at the same grade level as the public sidewalk. Where changes in grade are an important element of the overall design and programming, clear and direct access from the public sidewalk must be accommodated, and ensure universal accessibility.
- The edges of plazas should be lined with active uses at-grade, including building entrances, to animate and support the open space.
- Large parks and plazas should consider providing weather protection elements, such as canopies, at the perimeter of the space.
- Ensure the edges of open spaces that abut public sidewalks are unobstructed.
- Consider pedestrian movement through the site. Adjacent or nearby public uses such as open spaces, schools or community centers might inform where and how pedestrian

circulation networks should be provided. Consider existing and potential pedestrian desire lines in the design and placement of walkways.

- New residential and commercial uses should locate secondary building entrances, windows, outdoor seating, patios, and balconies to overlook parks and plaza spaces. Multiple entrances will promote activity in the space.
- Locate active uses along the edges of open spaces to create eyes on the street. Spill-out spaces, such as patios are encouraged.

## *Landscape and Amenities*

- Small scale elements should be used to create a human scale, and to define smaller sub-areas within the parks and plaza for ample seating and gathering in the sun and shade.
- Provide ample seating, and co-ordinate seating locations with the park and plaza features.
- Plant materials should be tolerant of urban conditions.
- Ensure all elements, including adjacent building façades, paving and planters are of a high-quality design, materials and construction.
- Provide pedestrian scale lighting at appropriate locations.



*Appropriate seating, pedestrian scale lighting, and weather protection elements should be provided when possible.*

## 4.2 Paseos and Pedestrian Pathway System

A paseo can function as a passive green buffer that visually screens more intensive development from an abutting single-family neighborhood while providing passive circulation paths for bicycles, pedestrians and automobile.

A paseo can also function as an active linear public space that creates connectivity to adjacent sites and provides an opportunity for more intensive uses such as sitting, gathering, public art, and social interaction. This concept is showcased at a development called The Meridian at Midtown located between Race Street and Meridian Avenue in the West San Carlos Urban Village and is also proposed at the Great Oaks Development in South San Jose connecting River Oaks Parkway to Coyote Creek Trail. Similarly, the former San Jose Redevelopment Agency successfully executed several paseos, such as the Paseo de San Antonio, that were envisioned in the San Jose Downtown Streetscape Master Plan (2003).

Under certain criteria, including public access, active paseos constructed by residential developers and located on private property may be eligible for “private recreation” credit toward their obligation under the City’s Park and Dedication and Park Impact Ordinances (PDO/PIO).

For guidelines and standards, refer to Chapter 5, Urban Design.



*Paseo design shall include pedestrian/bike only paths, signature landscape schemes and simple amenities, such as seating and water fountains.*



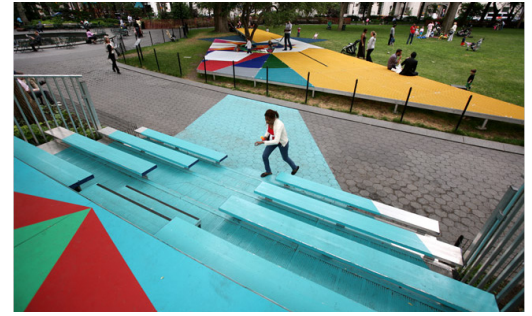
## 4.3 Placemaking

To create a sense of place in the SVRF Village, public art and other placemaking elements will be incorporated into new commercial and residential development, bus stops, plazas, and the public right-of-way and sidewalks. Public art can be traditional sculpture or murals; it can also be incorporated into the design of infrastructure and amenities as sidewalks, street furniture, wayfinding elements, environmental systems (e.g. stormwater), transit systems, and lighting to become an integral part of the public realm. It may be temporary or long term in nature. Depending on the funding sources, public art may also include “plug and play” events and performances within parks and plazas.

At present, the community has identified the Winchester Mystery House, Santana Row and Century Theaters as memorable places within the Urban Village. When asked about additional placemaking elements that will be appropriate for the SRVF Urban Village, residents at public meetings have recommended the following:

- Public art + parks and green spaces
- Enhanced Landscaping
- Street/tree lighting
- Student/resident artwork on mural or utility boxes
- Community events such as farmers’ markets

As the SRVF Village continues to evolve, public art and public space activation will play a significant role in engaging the community, increasing sense of place, and enhancing the quality of experience in the area. Business owners, property owners, and resident groups may initiate public art projects or event programming, obtaining guidance from the City where needed. Artists, integrated early into the design of public infrastructure and private development, can identify new ways of project delivery that enhances the public space as well as private development. Successful public art implementation would contribute greatly to “branding” the Santana Row/Valley Fair Urban Village, giving it a memorable identity.



*Public art incorporation shall be designed to provide a sense of place and respond to both daytime and nighttime activities.*

### 4.3-1 GOALS AND POLICIES

**GOAL P-3** Build on existing public art within the SRVF Urban Village to ensure that public art and placemaking play a significant role in the public spaces. Promote the inclusion of a diverse and stimulating public art and public space activation to enhance the pedestrian experience, and improve the economic vitality of this Urban Village.

#### Policies

- Policy 4-12:** Ensure that public art is considered in development of open spaces and public facilities, including sidewalks, streets, parks, plazas, transit stops, wayfinding systems, trail network, community facilities and stormwater management areas.
- Policy 4-13:** Engage the surrounding community in the development of a public art to increase the local identity of the public art and cultivate community-based art projects.
- Policy 4-14:** Integrate artists early into the design of public infrastructure and private development to provide a sense of place, and enhance the quality of experience in the area.
- Policy 4-15:** Locate plazas in the areas that will support community events such as farmer's markets, art fairs, live music and other periodic special programming, and near parking.
- Policy 4-16:** Employ paseos as new development abuts existing neighborhoods, where such a feature would facilitate the continuation of an existing paseo or provide new connection to an adjacent site.
- Policy 4-17:** Work with the community to integrate adaptive reuse and public art with the Century 21 Theatre site.
- Policy 4-18:** Public art should be designed to respond to day and night activities.

- Policy 4-19:** Incorporate art into streetscape elements such as crosswalks, stormwater management systems, bus stops, light poles, bicycle racks.
- Policy 4-20:** Engage the surrounding community to ensure that public art is authentic and reflects the cultural values of the SVRF Urban Village and surrounding community.
- Policy 4-21:** Encourage local business owners and resident groups to initiate cultural events that help foster a strong art community in the Urban Village.
- Policy 4-22:** Support the activation of public spaces with events and other activities that enhance the character, identity and attractiveness of the Urban Village.

## Action Items

- » Explore strategies to allow for the continued funding of public art.
- » Work with the residents, businesses, artists, and property owners to identify potential locations for art installations.



Public art may be thought provoking and reflect cultural values of the Santana Row/Valley Fair Urban Village.



## GUIDELINES

### A toolkit for Art and Placemaking: elements that frame and define a place

The following are intended to provide guidelines for community, and public and private development to integrate public art with places and in placemaking.

- **Elements of Distinction** are unique, memorable features.
  - Add meaning and metaphor to spaces to communicate and reflect the lives, values, and priorities of the community that lives with or adjacent to the Urban Village.
  - Consider art as a large scale and character defining element.
  - Incorporate iconic, destination-quality artwork, particularly in commercial development and open space where the scale of the location may support larger scale artwork.
  - Consider art to be iconic or functional.
  - Integrate art with linear parks. For example, incorporate art in unique small park gathering spaces that can provide comfort.
  - Merge art and play areas.
  - Incorporate art into pedestrian bridges and passageways to create a unique experience and welcoming place.
  - Consider small-grain details in placemaking. For example, provide special paving in design of new landscapes.
  - Consider interactive public art installations



Art installations are encouraged to be iconic, functional, and interactive.

## GUIDELINES

- **Elements of Continuity** are repeated elements that create a sense of character.
  - Unify major streets by incorporating design elements into the streetscape such as surface treatment and crosswalks, special lighting, unique seating, specially treated bike racks and utility covers with fine-grained covers, and utility boxes with public art.
  - Incorporate interactive art projects and designate locations to accommodate a program of changing temporarily-placed artwork.
- **Elements of Change** are temporary features such as, performances, events, festivals, and fairs.
  - Employ temporary and interactive placemaking that varies users' experience of a space at different times of the year.
  - Use art in social engagement, such as pop-up eateries serving a range of food from different cultures.
  - Use art to celebrate community rituals, such as special events to celebrate cultural, religious and spiritual activities.



Elements of continuity and change celebrate the character of the Urban Village area.

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